After battling the area’s top competition for the first four games of this season, Charlotte Catholic’s varsity field hockey team is looking to finish the season strong and advance deep into the playoffs.

The team’s first game of the year was September 14 against Myers Park. The game went in to double overtime and a controversial call by the official gave the Mustangs possession close to Catholic’s goal. Myers Park took advantage, scoring the game winning goal, and handing the Cougars their first loss of the season. The team’s next two games were hard-fought losses to Asheville High School and Providence Day, games in which the Cougars played well but were not quite able to pull out victories. Catholic then faced its top competition and rival Country Day but came up short, competing well in a losing effort.

Although Catholic has not gotten the results it wanted early in the season, these games were all against quality competition, and the Cougars showed that they can contend with the best teams in the area. They have a young, talented team that should only improve as it plays more games and gets deeper into the season.

“We have a lot of strengths, both individually and as a whole. We have some really strong hitters, some good finishers, and I think we're all well-conditioned, which helps us out a lot,” said junior captain Erica Batres.

The leadership of Batres and senior captains Avery Shaw and Megan Carlin will be crucial this season, as the team is very young because of the many players that graduated last year. Batres has high expectations for this season, and plans to build off of last season’s postseason success.

“I’m hoping we can make it to be conference champions like we were last year, and hopefully we can make it to a further round in playoffs,” said Batres.

Last year, after winning the conference championship, the Cougars faced Reagan High School in the first round of the state tournament. They lost 2-0, but gained valuable postseason experience that should benefit this year’s team as the season continues.

The team has a new coach this year, Mrs. Baker, the mother of Charlotte Catholic graduate Cait Baker. Her knowledge of the game and ability to encourage the team to higher levels of performance should benefit the Cougars this year. Baker replaced Ms. Liza Davis, who had coached the team since its beginning.